UPS News
Enforcing full-time job language.
p. 3

Freight News
Tentative contract to be voted.
p. 4

Reform in Chicago
Changing an old guard local.
pp. 6-7

Mich. H&W Victory
Hoffa and friends fail members.
p. 8

Convoy Dispatch

VOICE OF THE TEAMSTER RANK AND FILE SINCE 1975 — Feb./March 1998 #166

Countdown to Teamster Election

Diana Kilmury
Teamster International Vice President at Large
Co-chair, Teamsters for a Democratic Union

The fight is on. In July and August every Teamster will have a chance to once again vote on whether our great union will take a leap forward or slide backward.

In this past year we've been hit hard. As someone working for democratic reform for 20 years I've been sickened, as many of you have, by what a few consultants did to jeopardize what so many Teamsters have fought for.

But the foundation of Teamster reform is strong. Even in the midst of daily assaults by the media and anti-labor politicians we managed to pull off the greatest labor victory of this decade in the UPS strike. We went on to defeat the expansion of NAFTA.

That's the fighting spirit we'll need to win this election against those who would turn back the clock. How nonsensical it is that those old guard officials who gave rise to the need for Teamster reform in the first place now claim that they should be leading it. So great is their lust for power that they are joining forces with the employers and their puppets in Congress.

If UPS executives and Rep. Peter Hoekstra (R-Michigan) want Junior Hoffa, why should we? Indeed, Teamster members have rejected Hoffa's clones in recent local elections across North America. All we have to do is take the message of Teamster reform to each and every Teamster member.

It won't be easy. But it never has been easy, and Teamster members are up to the challenge. Let's get started!

Teamster Election Timeline

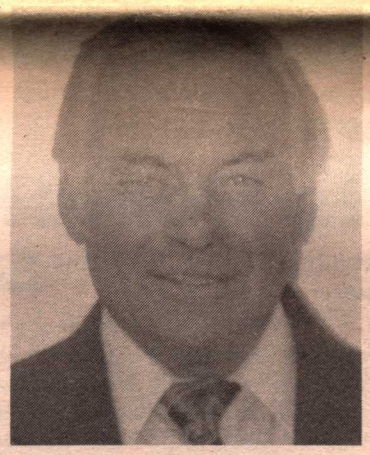
- **Early April:** Report from Election Officer on the investigation of the Hoffa Slate's funding.
- **May 1:** Nominating ballots sent to delegates to the 1996 IBT convention.
- **May 15:** Nominating ballots returned and tallied.
- **May 29:** Deadline for slate declarations and candidate withdrawals. *(Under the proposed rules, candidates are free to alter existing slates or form new ones.)*
- **June 29:** Notice of election posted at all work sites and in *Teamster* magazine.
- **July 27:** Mailing of ballots to all 1.4 million Teamsters.
- **August 25:** Begin counting ballots.

This plan has been presented by the Election Officer to Judge David Edelstein for approval.

Minneapolis Local 1145 Teamsters struck Honeywell Corp. after rejecting a company proposal that included two-tier benefits for new hires. Local officials recommended the offer, but the members organized to fight. See page 8.

JOIN TDU

Through the TDU movement we have worked for reform for over 20 years, and we've started to turn this union around. The coming election is one more challenge for us to meet and show what the Teamster rank and file can do. Recent local elections show that when given an option the members will choose reform.
It's a good thing this union has TDU to keep us on the right track. The reform slate can win this election. To make that happen we need Teamsters like you on the reform team, and that means joining TDU. Join today!



Ken Mee, International Vice President, Western Region

TDU MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____ Local _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (____) _____ Company _____

❑ City ❑ Road ❑ Dock ❑ Clerical ❑ Warehouse ❑ Construction ❑ Production

other _____

___ $35 one-year membership & subscription to *Convoy Dispatch.*

___ $85 three-year membership fee. ($10 shall be rebated to the local chapter)

___ $20 for spouses, and Teamsters who gross less than $17,000 a year.

___ $20 for retirees. Retired from Local ____ .

Check or money order

Mastercard/Visa # _____ Exp. date ___/____

Date _____ Signature _____

Return to: TDU, P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich. 48210

TDU membership is kept confidential from employers. TDU solicits and accepts membership applications and donations only from Teamsters, retired Teamsters and spouses who are not employers.

Contract Reached in L.A. School District 3 Years After Joining Union

Lupe Ramirez
Local 572 shop steward
Los Angeles Unified School District

School supervisors for the Los Angeles Unified School District finally ratified our first contract in January, after three years of hard work. Our unit of 2,900 supervisors, representing 216 different job classifications in over 1,100 schools and work sites spread throughout the entire 750 square mile school district, had voted to join Teamsters Local 572 in June of 1996.

Our need to organize was undeniable. Management often treated us unequally, played favorites, and never seemed to take our concerns seriously. We were supposed to have occasional "round table" discussions with the superintendent to talk over our concerns, but the superintendent would always send a representative, and the representative wouldn't really listen to what we had to say.

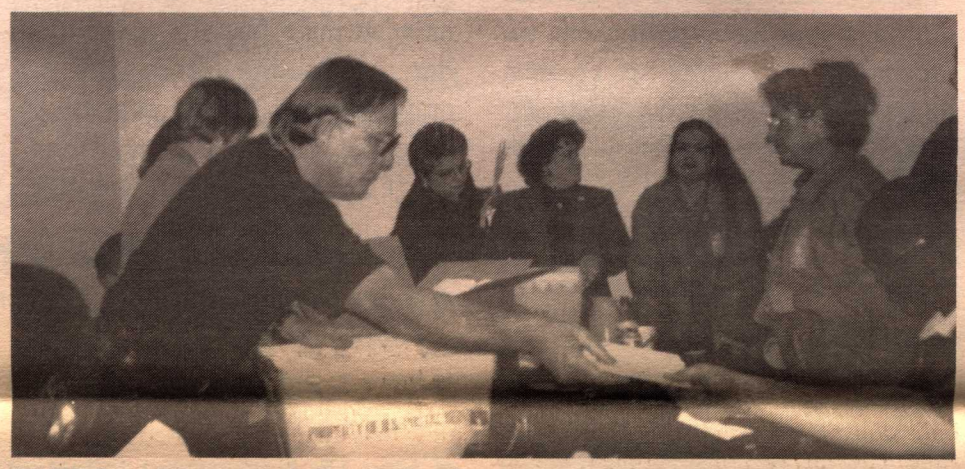
Additionally, in recent years the district has been balancing the budget by furloughing employees. When it would come time to put people on furlough, we noticed that our group, Classified Supervisors, were usually the first to go, and were kept out of work longer than other job classifications, which were unionized. Despite the fact that we had Personnel Commission Rules and the Education Code Laws that guaranteed us rights and fair treatment, in reality we had no recourse as unrepresented employees.

Fed up with our situation, a group of us decided to look into joining a union. We called several unions, and although all seemed happy to have us join, only the Teamsters were willing to help us organize. At first, it seemed impossible, as diverse and spread out as our unit was. But the IBT organizer I started working with was enthusiastic, and had some good ideas about how to get our organizing drive off the ground. He made me believe we could do it.

Starting with a small group of dedicated people, we launched our organizing drive. Almost immediately, another group of supervisors, with support from management, circulated letters saying that all we needed was a "supervisor's association." Most people saw through this phony proposal, and more people got involved. When the ballots were counted, we had won by a four-to-one margin.

I was elected to the committee that would help us win our first contract. After a year of time wasting, face-saving maneuvers, and petty differences on management's part, we finally came to an agreement on the night before Thanksgiving, 1997. And on Jan. 2, the members approved the contract, 1,067-64.

With our contract approved, we begin with the enforcement process. This has been a long and arduous process, but it's been worth it. Now we have some concrete guidelines and procedures in place, and our managers are no longer allowed to use the "shoot from the hip and rule of the day" type of management that so many of us found unbearable. I am now a proud member of Teamsters Local 572, and I feel that I have been a part of something that will benefit all of us. This was one of the greatest experiences of my life, and I am elated with our success.



LAUSD Committee counts ballots on Jan. 2.

Creative Action Restores Hours

Four members of 1199/National Health and Human Services union employed at Rite Aid in Ronkonkoma, N.Y., got creative when the pharmacy cut shifts. The four showed up for their previous hours and sat in the pharmacy waiting area, telling the long lines of customers they wished they could help them, but management wouldn't let them. They encouraged customers to call in their complaints. Two and a half weeks later they were back to working their previous shifts, with back pay.

Index

UPS News ..... p. 3
Freight News..... p. 4
Grocery, Warehousing ..... p. 5
Reform in Chicago ..... pp. 6-7
Mich. H&W Suit ..... p. 8
Organizing for a Strike..... p. 9
Inside Our Union 10
TDU, Local Union News..... p. 11

Labor Notes School, March 26-29

Democracy Is Power

Labor Notes, the Detroit-based labor publication, is conducting a school on building union strength through member involvement. The school will take place at the Plaza Hotel in Southfield, Mich., just outside of Detroit, on March 26 to 29. Sessions will include Power on the Shop Floor, Building a Union Caucus, Using the Law for Democracy, Union Officers Building Support for Democracy, and more.

The school will begin at 1 p.m. on Thursday and end at 2 p.m. on Sunday. Registration cost is $80; rooms at the Plaza are $69 per night, plus tax. Participants must register in advance. For more information, contact Labor Notes at (313) 842-6262.

How to Contact TDU

We want to hear from you. Contact us at the address below for more information about TDU, or to send us articles or letters concerning Teamster-related issues.

National Office: P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich., 48210 (313) 842-2600.
TDU can be contacted via e-mail at:
tdudetroit@igc.org
or on the World Wide Web at:
http://www.igc.org/tdu/
NY Office: 500 State St., 2nd floor, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11218 (718) 624-7746.

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TDU International Steering Committee

Co-Chairs:
Dan Campbell, Fort Worth, Texas, Local 767
Joe Fahey, Watsonville, Calif., Local 912
Diana Kilmury, Vancouver, B.C., Local 155
Michael Savwoir, Kansas City, Mo., Local 41
Organizer:
Ken Paff, Detroit
Trustees:
Steve Baudo, Milwaukee Local 344
Bob Blanchet, San Jose, Calif., Local 287
Patricia Franks, Allentown, Pa., Local 773
Members:
Alex Adams, Cleveland Local 407
Gillian Furst, Minneapolis Local 1145
Homer Lambert, Chicago Local 743
Joyce Mims, Atlanta Local 728 spouse
Lucio Reyes, Stockton, Calif., Local 601
Michael Ruscigno, New York Local 802
Willie Smith, Columbus, Ohio Local 413
Alternates:
Dave Staiger, Detroit Local 243
Steve French, Portland, Ore., Local 206
Tom Sheibley, Brockton, Mass., Local 653

Who We Are

CONVOY DISPATCH is the voice of Teamsters for a Democratic Union. We are the united rank and file movement to reform the Teamsters, created out of the merger of PROD and TDU.

We are truck drivers, dock workers, production workers—every kind of Teamster, and spouses, too.

We are a grassroots organization with chapters from coast to coast in the USA and Canada. We believe in returning this union to the membership and we are doing it. We are a democratic organization in which every member has a voice and vote. Our 15-member International Steering Committee was elected in November 1997 for one year. Our Rank & File Convention had over 600 representatives present.

We are proud Teamsters standing up for our rights. TDU invites all Teamsters interested in defending our contracts and reforming our union to join us. We do reserve the right to exclude those who are opposed to TDU and its principles.

Rank & File Bill of Rights

I. DEMOCRATIC BY-LAWS. All business agents and stewards should be elected. Vacancies in office should be filled by special election within three months. Local union committees should be elected. Contract and strike votes should be by majority (not two-thirds). All contracts should provide for elected officers retaining company seniority.

II. DIRECT ELECTION OF OFFICERS. General President and all International officers should be elected by the membership. International VPs elected by regions. An end to trusteeships and split-off locals.

III. A FAIR GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE. Innocent until proven guilty, right to remain on the job until final procedure completed. Grievance procedure should include right to a speedy trial, arbitration by peers, and the right to strike if necessary.

IV. PRESERVATION OF WORKING CONDITIONS. The union's purpose is to expand and preserve what we have, not trade it away for anything less. People come first, not productivity.

V. SAFETY AND HEALTH. We have the right to enter the workplace without fear for our health and leave in the same condition we arrive. Teamsters should have the right, backed up by our union, to refuse unsafe work or hazardous conditions. We are not machinery.

VI. EIGHT-HOUR DAY AND FIVE-DAY WEEK. Forced overtime and unfair dispatch rules destroy our family life and cost us jobs. No mandatory overtime, "flexible" work weeks, or 70-hour slavery. We are for the advent of the four-day work week. We work to live, not live to work!

VII. A DECENT PENSION. Every dollar in the pension funds belongs to us. We are entitled to 25-and-out, cost of living on pensions, and union pension trustees elected by the rank and file and retirees to safeguard our money.

VIII. JUST SALARIES FOR OFFICERS. A union officer can't understand the problems of members who make less than half what he makes. No officer should make more than the highest paid working members in his jurisdiction. No multiple salaries from union, company, or government sources, or special fringes and pensions. Salary increases limited to the average increase for membership, and subject to membership approval.

IX. EQUALITY AMONG TEAMSTERS. Bring all wage levels up to the highest standards, not a lot for the few and little for the many. Fight the hardest for the lowest paid.

X. END TO DISCRIMINATION. Employers have used the differences in age, race and sex to divide us for decades. We oppose these injustices and divisions. Support affirmative action to correct past injustices. Employers should bear the cost of their past discrimination, not the members.

Mobilize Members to Win Full-Time UPS Jobs

The UPS contract campaign was the biggest victory any labor union has won in years. We won because the members mobilized *before and during* the strike and stayed together. Tens of thousands of people learned that you can fight city hall and win!

But UPS is not going to roll over for the next four and one-half years. Their plan is to ignore as much of the contract as possible, leaving the members discouraged and going back to the old way of thinking that "you just can't win." They will stonewall us and harass us and hope to split us apart. If the new contract is going to be more than just another piece of paper that UPS can ignore, we have to remember that it was the *members taking action* that won the campaign.

The best strategy to defeat UPS's plan is for us to go on the offensive. We have to take *our* issues and campaign around them in our centers and hubs.

Strategy #1: Chart Part-Time Shifts

Some of our issues will vary from one area to another, but one nationwide issue is making sure UPS creates the new full-time jobs it committed to. Forcing UPS to create at least 10,000 new full-time jobs was one of the most important victories of the UPS contract campaign. Articles 22 and 40 of the National Agreement set up a procedure for combining part-time jobs to create new full-time positions. (See box for contract language.) It is up to us to see that we actually get these jobs. *Here is what members can do:*

1. Show this article to your steward. Ask him or her to ask UPS management for a copy of the Weekly Operations Report for part-timers in their area – the one that shows hours worked for each day of the week plus the weekly average for hours worked. Stewards have the right to this information under the National Labor Relations Act. Stewards should explain to UPS that they need it to investigate compliance with the new contract.

If the steward doesn't want to do it, or if management refuses, contact your local union rep and ask him or her to tell UPS to honor the request. If necessary, get petitions to UPS and your BA signed by the members. If UPS still refuses, file a grievance under Article 4 and ask your local to file a charge with the NLRB. (For more information on stewards rights to information, see Chapter 4 in *The Legal Rights of Union Stewards,* available from TDU.)

2. Once you have obtained the Operations Report for a part-time shift, talk with other stewards and compare it with part-time shifts before and after it. Look for shifts which overlap, or shifts which end within one hour of the start of the next shift (two hours in air operations) to produce eight hours of work.

3. Tell UPS management that when a vacancy is created on one of these shifts, they should create a full-time job. If they don't create a full-time job, file a grievance under Article 22 or Article 40. You may want to do other actions to demonstrate to management that the members are serious about enforcing their rights. Be creative.

Strategy #2: Enforce the Over-70 Agreement

Package Drivers. What we want is to create as many dedicated "over 70-bulk delivery/pick-up" routes as possible. The only way this is going to happen is if it becomes more economical to deliver over-70 packages this way. Think of it – right now most over 70s get delivered without assistance from another Teamster. Drivers don't want to hassle with calling for help even though they have the right to do so guaranteed by the contract. This right applies to all situations where the driver in his or her good faith judgment feels that it is necessary.

So if we stick together and do the right thing with our over-70 deliveries and pickups, it will become expensive for the company to have drivers breaking off constantly to help with over-70 deliveries or pickups. Stewards should offer managers a solution. Creating dedicated over-70 routes would be a good idea. Make the route(s) a CPU-type route with bulk delivery and pick ups. Suggest that the driver be provided with a full-time helper to facilitate delivery and pick up. This would create another full-time job. Make as many of these type routes as you can.

If management resists, you may have a grievance under Article 44, Section 4 of the new contract.

Part-Timers. With very few exceptions, part-timers want more hours. So, why is it that so many part-timers handle over-70 packages by themselves? Insist that the contract be followed. Review Article 44 of the new contract. Do not let management violate the contract. Insist that two-person handling be the rule. Especially, do not let over-70 packages be co-mingled with other packages during the sort. They must be segregated for safety's sake. Of course, this also takes more time – too bad.

All Employees. Everyone should know that due to a recent court ruling, if you get hurt handling an over-70 pound package and that injury prevents you from doing your present job, you may not be able to get an accommodation under Article 14 of the contract or the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). So, every time you lift an over-70 package by yourself, you risk the end of your job at UPS.

Strategy #3: Take Lunch and Breaks; Don't Work Off the Clock

Do the math. If you have a 40-driver center and the average meal not taken is 15 minutes, that is 40 x 15 = 600 minutes or 10 hours. That's one more full-time job. Simple, isn't it?

If members work prior to their start time, remind them that:

- It means they are working for nothing.
- It hurts other members by making it look like the job can be done in less time than it really takes.

If members continue to work prior to their start time, file a grievance requesting that the members be paid for their work.

If the grievances are won the local union has a right to see a copy of separate monetary settlement checks as provided in new language in Article 7.

Above all, remember that our strength is on the shop floor. UPS fears membership unity and action. They fear the grievance procedure only if there is enough membership pressure to make them pay. **Use the grievance procedure as one tool in your toolbox. Membership unity is the big hammer!**

Mileage Mania

Michael Savwoir
Local 41, UPS Feeder Driver
Kansas City

UPS continues to try to undermine the contract by proposing mileage meets. Such proposals pit local against local in a bidding war for additional jobs. Those locals willing to compromise the interest of the National Master UPS Agreement gain a few jobs as they weaken the integrity of the bargaining unit in pursuit of mileage mania. The new UPS contract prohibits any new mileage meets. In fact, a local that agrees to such deals could possibly be subject to charges. Yet some locals are agreeing to them.

It's no secret that UPS has long sought ways to create an incentive feeder driver, reduce the cost of labor, eliminate overtime, and create divisions in our ranks. The perfect solution for this is the conversion of all new jobs to mileage runs. Mileage runs are a natural incentive to "beat the clock." Even the most conscientious driver is tempted to skip lunch and breaks, compromise safety considerations, exceed posted speed limits, push DOT regulations to the very limit, and take unnecessary risks; for he is conditioned to believe that the quicker he finishes the more he will earn.

Mileage runs reduce the cost of labor by eliminating one of the most fundamental principles of unions: time and one-half after eight hours in service. Mileage runs create divisions in our ranks.

Most of these mileage meets are currently being offered on a five-day basis (the bait) providing a very desirable weekly earning. According to Article 43, section 1, "...the Employer may move the fifth day loads via a TOFC pursuant to Article 26." You can rest assured the Employer **will** move the load on the fifth day via TOFC, reducing the very desirable weekly earning to a 40-hour straight shot, no chaser (overtime). This ploy to achieve the long desired 40-hour week for feeder drivers will be a dream come true for UPS managers, wrapped in a very arduous 10-hour drive time package.

There is a simple way to stop this mileage mania: just say **No**! Simply say no to the sweetheart deals and the twisted interpretations of our contract language. We can simply say no to the whip-sawing of local against local and driver against driver. We can simply say no to the compromise of our standards, our health and our unity.

UPS & Downs

Team Concept Takes a Dive.

An NLRB complaint asserting that team concept and other self-directed work team programs implemented by UPS were unlawful was settled on Feb. 12. UPS agreed to cease and desist from using any of its existing team programs – Team Concept, the Star Point Captain program and the Best Team program. After a campaign of nearly three years against these programs, this agreement is a significant victory for Teamsters at UPS.

The Teamsters UPS National Negotiating Committee and local unions 104 and 769 had charged that these programs were unlawful because the company did not bargain with the union before implementing them and that the groups were in essence illegal "company unions." The union's position was that the groups were established to deal with mandatory subjects of bargaining where the groups gave the phony impression that the members were empowered to make decisions, when in reality they were dominated by management. After a lengthy investigation, the NLRB agreed with the union, and a complaint was issued against UPS.

Next up? After admitting to violating the law, watch for UPS to use its considerable money and political muscle to encourage their "friends in Congress" to pass the Team Act – an effort by anti- labor politicians and big business to legitimize company unions.

UPS Advisor Cited for Vandalism.

During the UPS strike the company was known to trot out highly paid advisors, usually with impressive academic credentials, to tell CNN and the public the company's side of the story. They would routinely trash our Teamster leadership and confidently predict how the rank and file would cave into the company demands after they lost a paycheck or two.

The most prominent was Jeffrey Sonnenfeld of Emory University who was wrong on every count during the strike. Despite this, the Georgia Institute of Technology offered him a $200,000-a-year deanship at their business school. He was then caught by a security camera defacing a wall at Emory University after having given them notice. Now neither university wants him and he's out of a job.

Tentative Freight Agreement to Go Out for Vote

The Teamster National Freight Industry Negotiating Committee reached a tentative agreement with Trucking Management Inc. (TMI) on the eve of the Feb. 12 actions that were scheduled at all four TMI carriers. That proposed contract will go out to all freight members for a mail vote in March.

The agreement was unanimously endorsed by the union negotiating committee, which includes several officers from both major factions within the union.

The various regional supplements, which were bargained separately by committees in the regions, have all reached tentative settlements as well.

The contract is with TMI, which includes Yellow, CF, Roadway and ABF. Eastern regional companies New Penn and A-P-A have agreed to its terms, and the union will now approach all the other freight companies with the goal and expectation of winning the same terms across the board.

Members React

The pension improvements, the victory on 40-and-out, the improvements in job security and conditions are major plusses. The refreshing absence of any concessions is also.

Reports of member dissatisfaction center on the lack of a first-year wage increase and the overall wage package.

A two-page Freight Bulletin with an article-by-article summary of changes in the national master contract was produced by TDU and is in wide circulation.

Freight Teamsters should study the contract and their applicable regional supplement and attend the union meetings where they will be explained. The ratification vote will be in March.

TDU Members Spur Freight Campaign

The Freight '98 contract campaign started last October when a record number of Teamsters filled out surveys on bargaining priorities. The higher rate of participation was due to the IBT contract campaign, and also because TDU members organized a member-to-member network.

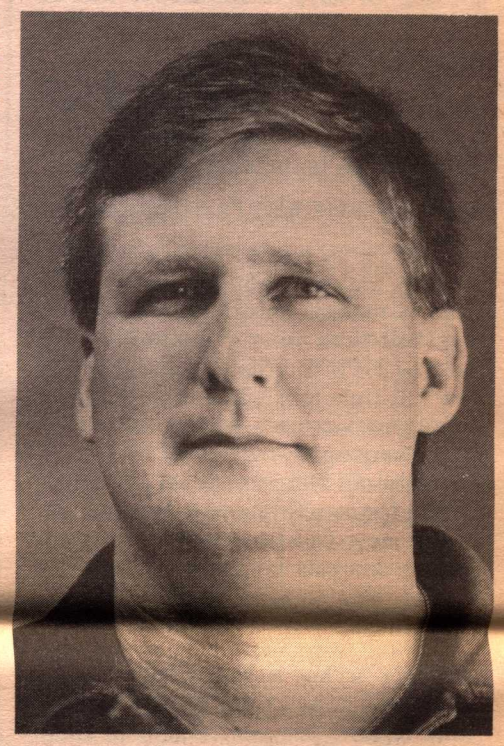
Two national Teamster Unity days where members wore stickers showed managers that this was not the same old union. We reminded them of what UPS Teamsters did last summer.

TDU members did more than their part in these actions and in helping to build meetings at a number of local union halls to plan campaign actions.

In January tens of thousands of members signed petitions in support of our union demands. Many locals dragged their feet or refused to participate and TDUers played an important role in reaching out to members.

TMI got the message. They knew they could not push Teamsters back this time. They didn't even try to win their part-timer demand that we struck against in 1994. In the end we beat all their concession demands. Members may disagree on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed contract, but we can all take pride in the membership unity that made a big difference.

Time to Organize Overnite



We were able to win a decent contract this year because of the membership involvement in 1994 and in carhaul the next year and at UPS last summer. TMI knew we were serious. Without the contract campaign on the ground, with member involvement, stickers, petitions, and rallies, we wouldn't have this settlement.

We won our top priorities – 30-and-out at $3,000 in Central States for example, and I'm glad both political factions had a hand in bringing it about.

Our experiences with the contract campaigns shows that this system works – when members are actively involved and you have an active, informed rank and file that translates into strength at the bargaining table.

It's time to put Overnite up on the front burner. The time has never been riper. We set an example to the Overnite guys of what we can do when we stand together. Each of us needs to take that message out there and work to organize more of the industry.

Five years from now there will be another contract. We need people to get active right now to take up the call of organizing, get active, become leaders, and fill the ranks for our brothers who will retire in the years to come.

—Darryl Connell
Local 200 organizer
Milwaukee

Beyond the Contract...

Will Teamsters Grow with Trucking Boom?

The economic forecast for the trucking industry keeps improving. Analysts predict a 21.4 percent increase in freight volume over the next years. Trucking's share of that freight is expected to rise from 60.3 percent to 62.5 percent.

Can Teamster members make comparable gains? The answer is simple. Our union will grow and our members prosper only if we can turn around the decline in our bargaining power.

We have to reverse the decline in the unionized sector of trucking with an aggressive organizing approach. The worker-to-worker organizing approach at Overnite has shown how to win. Now we need to build on that success to finish the job at Overnite and take the same approach to other non-union outfits. The double-breasted operations at Yellow and ABF are a good place to start. About 10 percent of their LTL revenues come from non-union subsidiaries. In the third quarter of 1997, Yellow's WestEx had a 30 percent growth over the same quarter last year.

The freight contract reflects the balance of forces in the industry. The key to improving our hand is organizing. And the key to organizing is an aggressive worker-to-worker program. The International has made a good start. We need a leadership committed to greatly expanding on that start.

How Contract Will Be Voted

All 120,000 freight Teamsters will be mailed a ballot in March to accept or reject the proposed NMFA and the regional supplements. Even though not all the companies have signed on yet, all freight Teamsters will vote together on the national industry standard. This is our way of maintaining a uniform pattern contract in the deregulation era.

Those companies that have not signed on will bargain with the union, and if any hold out they can be targetted for pressure or action.

Reforms Enhance Members' Power

The contract will be subject to majority rule, a reform we squeezed out of the old guard in 1988 after years of pressure.

Every freight Teamster will get a separate vote on their own supplemental contract, in addition to the national vote. This reform was won at the 1991 IBT Convention as a constitutional amendment, against the opposition of the group of officials now called the Hoffa slate.

A yes vote will put the contract into effect immediately at those companies that have signed on, and across the board as other companies do. A no vote would reject the contract and authorize strike action against all carriers or on a selective basis, as determined by the union committee.

All freight locals should hold meetings to explain the contract and take members' questions.

Freight Director Richard Nelson is going into the field to attend a number of such meetings in Dallas, Los Angeles, the San Francisco area, Atlanta, Charlotte, N.C., Baltimore, Columbus and Chicago.

Article 6, Section 2 Votes

A few regional companies have profit-sharing deals under Article 6, Section 2 of the NMFA. Those deals must be renegotiated and revoted in a separate vote at that company. It takes a 75 percent yes vote to approve a profit-sharing deal. Members at each affected company should study the facts.

Order CONVOY DISPATCH by the Bundle

Convoy Dispatch is a great source of news, and TDU's best recruiter. It will be especially important to keep members informed during the coming election period.

Want to help keep other Teamsters informed and build TDU? Order a bundle to distribute each issue.

Bundles are sent each issue. Prices per issue:

❑ $3 for 10 ❑ $5 for 20 ❑ $8 for 50 ❑ $12 for 100

Name _____ Local _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ Company _____

Return to: TDU, Box 10128, Detroit, Mich. 48210

The Threat of Outsourcing: What Can We Do?

Many grocery distribution companies and retailers are jumping on the "third-party" bandwagon. Food retailers are increasingly claiming they want to get out of the transportation or distribution business. Whether their motives are to make more money, save money in an operation in trouble, or to get rid of an inefficient operation, the results are often the same: long-time workers facing concessions or losing jobs. In some cases, the third party takes over the warehouse and negotiates a new contract with the union.

Most often, the local is informed right before the contract expires. Sometimes it is presented as: "We need to seriously cut costs in this contract. If we can't, we'll have to give the work to ABC Logistics." Other times it's a done deal: "We've decided to get out of the transportation business, so we signed a contract with XYZ Trucking. We're here to negotiate a severance package." Both situations leave the members and the local at a great disadvantage, to say the least. After the shock wears off, there is little or no time to investigate and present alternatives to the company's ultimatum.

Don't Give Up

None of these scenarios are impossible to deal with, and the last thing the union should do is throw up its hands and give up. Many locals have been able to fight back against serious concessionary demands and work out contracts that gave some relief to the company in the first couple of years and put things back in over the final two to three years.

Local 282 and 202 members at King Kullen in New York fought back and caused large losses in revenue and market share through a boycott campaign. They did not save the grocery warehouse, but were able to save the produce warehouse and gained a much better severance agreement. Their hard work meant that other companies in the area will think twice about doing what King Kullen did.

That spirit at King Kullen needs to grow and spread widely among warehouse Teamsters. We need to continue forming regional and company-wide networks to share information, plan strategies, and work toward greater coordination in beating back the outsourcing threat. TDU can help do that by connecting members to link up and set goals like Teamsters at UPS did 20 years ago and members at Frito-Lay are doing now. If Supervalu is looking for concessions in Connecticut, then Wisconsin can count on it next. TDU can help Teamsters start communicating with one another and develop strategies to fight back.

What We Can Do

Here are some things we can do in advance to prepare for possible outsourcing. Member involvement on the shop floor is the key. No one knows the employer's operation better.

Keep Eyes Open: In the year before your contract is up, take notice of visitors looking over the operation. Get as much information as possible from management regarding their views on labor costs, the competition, etc. The union should send a letter to the company asking to be informed if any outside bids are being taken to perform the work, or if any alternatives are being investigated by the company. If so, they should meet with the company to get as much information as possible.

Information Requests: The union has the right to any information about company finances and operations necessary to be able to bargain in an informed way if the company is claiming they are doing this because of financial issues. This could include: breakdown of labor costs, including nonunion personnel, bids from third parties, costs of the operation (equipment, leases, heat, etc.).

Bargaining: The company, in most cases, has a duty to bargain to impasse with the union over a decision to close. It is the union's obligation to bargain as well. That doesn't mean we have to agree to whatever the outcome is.

Pressure: As soon as the company indicates it may be shutting down an operation or demanding deep concessions, a campaign to get public support can start. There are important strategic and legal issues that should be discussed before starting such a campaign. Having a good relationship with other unions and community groups **before** you need their help is always the best situation to be in.

Strike: Always be prepared for this possibility and make it clear you'll follow through if you must. But it's not always a good idea. Sometimes it gives the company the excuse they wanted in order to pull the plug. Wield the threat, but pressure campaigns are often done best when everyone is working.

The IBT Warehouse Division is able to assist locals and their members when confronted with this situation. The division covers all Teamsters in the distribution and food processing business—warehouse, drivers, mechanics, and plant workers. Call (202) 624-8736 for assistance.

Michigan Frito-Lay Contract Approved by Narrow Margin

"We realized again how much better it would be if we were able to bring national pressure to bear on our local negotiations."

— Michigan Frito-Lay Teamster describing their recent contract bargaining.

The Michigan Frito-Lay contract, covering roughly 400 members, was accepted recently by a slim margin: 149 to 143. For the most part bargaining followed the national trend set by the company, with bonus payments, company-mandated changes in certain areas and few changes in other areas.

Most significantly they were able to make a small break with the one-time bonus trend. In the first year only of the agreement members will get a $10 increase in the base rate, raising it to $330. This was the first base increase in 15 years for Michigan Frito employees. The next two years are bonus payments of $1,500 each year. Warehouse employees got three percent increases. Most recent Frito contracts, from St. Louis to Virginia to New England have settled with no increase in base or percentage rates. California, with a regional agreement covering many locals, broke the trend last fall.

Route revisions are always a major concern. The Michigan contract made some progress in this area, winning a guarantee of 78 months in RRIC pay if a route isn't making the numbers. But in exchange, the company exacted a jump in the percentage cut allowed.

Also on route cuts, the agreement contains floor and ceiling protections, a base which can't be gone below and a ceiling of 10 percent (for RSR routes).

As always in bargaining, Frito pushed forward on delivery changes. They instituted a Bulk 24 delivery system to replace TDD distribution. Under the system a merchandiser, paid at a lower rate of $225 base/2.5 percent commission, drives a 24-foot truck, delivers and packs out product. They also got language allowing Express Routes, paid as a salaried position.

Small steps can be made with tough bargaining, but real progress at Frito will only come with national coordination. We need to keep building the Frito-Lay network.

Unity Campaign at Super Valu

Bob Randall
Local 559, Super Valu
Hartford, Conn.

Three years ago, Super Valu, a corporate giant in the grocery warehouse industry, purchased Sweet Life Foods in Suffield, Conn., and Northboro, Mass., along with their Teamster contracts. Shortly afterward, they flew their corporate executives to the region for one purpose only: to play one Super Valu local against another.

Their strategy was to intimidate the rank and file by subtly threatening that only Super Valu divisions willing to make major concessions would survive.

Hampered by separate contracts with different expiration dates, the locals did the best they could. As time has passed, most members believe that Super Valu will attempt this strategy again in the future and that something must be done to prevent it.

TDU members from the Suffield division kicked off a campaign on Feb. 20 to create a member-to-member network of Super Valu Teamsters. They traveled to Andover, Mass., to coordinate efforts with other rank and filers to push for a regional agreement.

Super Valu mechanic and TDU member Ed Cutler said, "It's a damn good idea. You just know that Super Valu is going to try that stuff every time our contract is up."

Interest and agreement from members in Andover was also very high.

Join the Frito-Lay Network

In November 1997 a group of Frito-Lay Teamsters from across the country met in Cleveland. Concerned about the lack of unity and coordination among Frito-Lay Teamsters, they established the Frito-Lay Network. The network is open to all Frito-Lay Teamsters.

The network is a grassroots effort. Our goal is to build union strength at Frito-Lay and assist Frito-Lay workers with education and information.

Our Goals:

- Increase the flow of information between Frito-Lay workers through meetings, newsletters, e-mail and Web sites.
- Fight company attacks on our contracts and working conditions. Stop the use of route revisions, one-time bonus pay and other means to undermine our pay.
- Coordinate contract goals and activity. Build regional and national solidarity. Work toward coordinated expiration dates, corporate campaigns and, eventually, a master agreement, with supplements that protect our local conditions.
- Lobby the International union for resources to help unite Frito-Lay Teamsters. The bakery division should provide services such as newsletters, training programs and staff reps to assist with bargaining.
- Fight company efforts to decertify bargaining units. Aid Frito-Lay workers interested in joining our union.

We can improve our jobs, by working together to build unity among all Frito-Lay workers. Your support will make a difference. Join the Frito-Lay Network today.

Yes, I Want to Support the Network

❑ Enclosed is my TDU membership application (see form on page 1) to support the network and get on the mailing list for future materials and updates.

❑ Please send me brochures about the network to pass out to co-workers.

❑ Please send me Frito-Lay unity petitions.

❑ Please send me copies of the national Frito-Lay survey.

Name _____ Local _____

Address _____

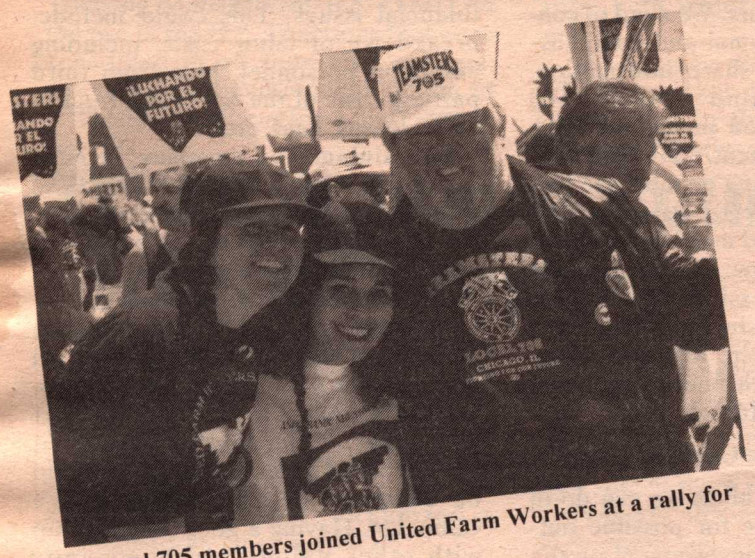
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

e-mail _____

Overcoming Corruption, Third-rate Contracts and Benefits in Hoffa Country

Reform Returns Power and



Local 705 members joined United Farm Workers at a rally for strawberry workers.

What would our union look like if Hoffa and his supporters were in control? Look no further than locals run by big-time Hoffa backers, like several large locals in Chicago. Until 1993, when the International placed it into trusteeship, Local 705 was one of those old guard "model" locals, run by Dan Ligurotis.

Decades of corruption and nepotism handed Local 705 members a bleak legacy: scores of substandard contracts, a goon squad atmosphere, second-rate medical and pension benefits and millions siphoned off into the pockets of Ligurotis' friends and family.

What does a reform local union look like? Today Local 705 is one of dozens of locals around the U.S. that are successfully fighting to overcome years of corruption and rebuild Teamster power. At the end of the trusteeship a reform team beat out old-guard forces in Local 705. Just last fall, the reformers won again, reelected by the members to keep moving forward with a positive program.

Reform works. The changes in Local 705 show what can be done when democracy and member involvement are established.

Interview with Local 705 Secretary-Treasurer Gerald Zero

'The Mob Saw Our Local as a Piec

Convoy Dispatch: What legacy did the old guard leave Local 705?

Gerald Zero: This local was very important to the mob. Basically, they saw our local as a piece of real estate. Also, when we came in here there were probably 400 contracts. At least 200 of those were two-tier, three-tier contracts. One, Carmichael Trucking, had 27 different pay scales! Now I'd say no more than 10 contracts still have two or more tiers. And these we expect to clean up.

That was extremely tough. There were many contracts where members were making $9 per hour and less! We told our reps right from the start "don't bring back any contracts where anyone makes any less than $12 per hour." If we had to put somebody out of business to do it, we would. But we only had to put one or two out of business. The employers caved in.

CD: What about the benefit funds, what condition were they in?

GZ: Our other big challenge was the health and welfare fund. It was in sad shape. We had to ask for significant increases in contribution rates, in some cases an increase of $15 per week, per member. The pension fund was in decent shape, but not great. Now the fund is closing in on a billion dollars. What they went after was the health and welfare money. Dan Ligurotis, Sherman Carmell (the attorney for the most corrupt, mob-connected Chicago labor leaders) and others had several schemes for siphoning money from the fund. A good example is the doctor who was head of the clinic. If you went to our clinic for a headache, hangnail or whatever you took a blood test. Every blood test went to a clinic that the doctor owned. So he was knocking down three or four hundred thousand dollars just on blood tests alone.

Local 705 membership meeting.

CD: When you came in you replaced the union trustees on the funds, but did the employer trustees fight your proposals?

GZ: Oh yeah, they fought. The hardest thing was getting rid of the fund attorney, Carmell, who was part of the scheme to take money out of here. All of his relatives were tied in—his daughter worked for some investment firm that the fund had about $30 million with. His son-in-law was the head of a firm that handled the legal service plan—they were billing us for a couple million bucks. Carmell himself was knocking down a half a million a year.

Basically, we told the trustees that we would deadlock everything until Carmell was out. We left the room and they all met with him in one of the closets and he just left. We forced him out.

CD: Once givebacks like two-tier are in a contract, it can be tough to get them out. How were you able to do this?

GZ: We just said we've got to get rid of these, even if it takes time. We would negotiate a raise for the guys at the top, and then even more of a raise for the guys at the bottom of the scale—so eventually the rates would get closer.

We had one contract when we came in here, Emery Air Freight, with about 135 members. It had been three different companies at one time. They all did the same job working for the same company, but some made $16 per hour, some $15.80 and some $12.50. The ones at the bottom were almost all minorities. By the end of the contract, everyone will be making the same money and the Purolator workers, who didn't have a pension, are in the pension. It was a great contract. They accepted it two to one. Didn't need a strike, just the threat because we were bargaining hard.

CD: How are members involved in bargaining?

GZ: We decided that every committee would have rank and filers. They know the work better than anyone. They are your communication link with the rest of the workforce. Without rank and filers on the committee you've got less strength.

"I remember what our local meetings used to be like. If anyone spoke up or made a proposal, they would get thrown out or have chairs thrown at them. Now there's an open microphone and members can speak their minds. I remember how our pension plan took a hit under Ligurotis. It's better now, but not what it should be, thanks to what the old officials did."

—Bill Barbre
UPS Feeder Driver, Local 705 member 38 years

CD: You won the recent rerun election in the face of an all-out effort by the Hoffa forces. Clearly your support for reform is growing. Why?

GZ: If you involve the members, you will get the support. It's their union. It doesn't belong to me, I'm just lucky to be up here.

For one thing we do a lot of training for stewards, for members, for different crafts. We also bring in the bigger picture by talking about the broader labor movement, using videotapes from Jobs with Justice, having rallies to support other unions and getting members out to support other struggles. We've been to Decatur and to Detroit a couple of times—bus trips that involve the members.

When we came in there were only about 100 stewards. I talked to other locals and found out that one steward for every 40 members seemed to be the consensus—and we were something like 110 members to every steward! Some jurisdictions had no stewards under the old regime. At UPS there were no part-time stewards. Now there are probably about 60 of them. Overall we've added about 220 stewards.

CD: You mentioned getting members involved.

Pride to Chicago Local 705

Turning It Around

What They've Done:

- Since 1992 Local 705 has eliminated almost all two-tier provisions—a legacy from the old guard years of control. That's in nearly 200 contracts.
- Organized several thousand new members into the local. Recent organizing victories include units at Dobbs International (112-1 voted in favor of the union), Jetstar, Dillon and other tankhaul drivers. One major victory is a K-Mart warehouse—the first K-Mart facility to vote union.
- Established an organizing win rate of 90 percent—over double the normal success rate in representation elections. One recent win at A.E. Sween (a distributor for 7-11 stores) came on the heels of an aggressive management campaign that included videotapes given to all workers right before the vote. 705 won that vote by a two to one margin.
- Rebuilt the health and welfare fund. In 1993 it was losing $6 million per year. Assets today are around $55 million. This was done while boosting coverage for members.
- Led a membership campaign to pressure management pension fund trustees into improving pension benefits. Returned over $13 million to the health and welfare fund through lawsuits filed against the trustees.
- Restored pride and power. Over 500 members attend union meetings. Over 300 members now serve as stewards.

ce of Real Estate'

How many members attend union meetings?

GZ: Around 500-600 attend, which is good but we'd like to see even more. We've doubled it from under the old leadership. One thing we did was change meetings to Sunday mornings so more people could attend.

CD: What about elected stewards? Is this an issue you've had to face?

GZ: The first year we were out of trusteeship, we put in a proposal for elected stewards that would have still given us some control over bad stewards. Back then our meetings were pretty raucous. I came down to the mike to speak in favor of elected stewards, but the Hoffa people started disrupting the meeting and going nuts. So the chair closed the meeting. Last year we decided to see how things went. Some proposals were put in but they were shot down because the proposal was to have elections even if one member complained about a steward. We still need to address this issue in the future.

CD: What expectations do you have for stewards?

GZ: They are expected to investigate and handle grievances in the early stages. And they have been a big help. This means that we've been able to reduce the number of representatives, while still insuring that members get excellent representation. When we came in there were 38 reps, now we have about 24. The resources saved can go into organizing, membership training and other programs. It's because we have these stewards who do a good job. And we train them—we've had the IBT here five or six times, and we do our own training. Some of them, when we get to a six-man board here in our grievance procedure, they help present the case.

CD: With over 17,000 members, Local 705 is certainly big enough to go it on its own. Why reach out to others?

GZ: There is so much help we can get from other unions, so much we can do to help others. A good example was the UPS strike. Our message struck a chord with working people around the world. No local can take on UPS alone. Unions can't expect to win real victories without the power that comes from broad support. The union means so much more than servicing the members. There are a lot of young people here who are going to be good leaders. Mostly because they got good training.

CD: What are your goals for the future?

GZ: I'd like to see the local grow to 20,000 members. I'd also like to see the freight pension reach the UPS levels, which would help members enormously. And we'd like to have full medical coverage. It's much better than before, but I'd like to see 100 percent coverage. And, we'd like to get more members involved. The more members participate, the stronger the union is going to be.

CD: What is your opinion on multiple salaries?

GZ: For anyone to have three or four salaries is wrong. If you are doing one full-time job, you should be paid a salary to do that job. For example, the head of the joint council here makes $65,000. What does he do, work Monday for his local, Tuesday for the joint council? Why should you get another salary if you aren't working any more?

CD: What else needs to be done in our union, in the joint councils for example?

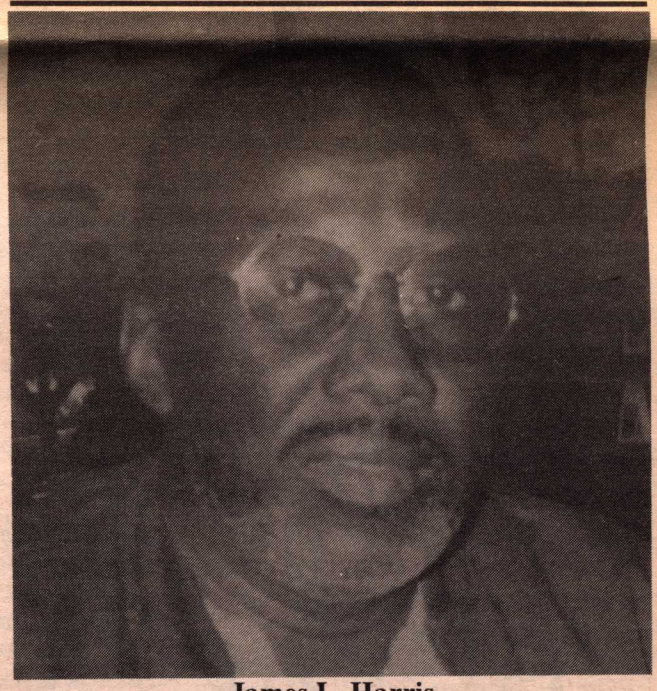
GZ: The joint councils are in the Dark Ages. It is horrible how much money in the joint councils goes to salaries and pensions. They get extra salaries. I don't know what they do.

One idea that came up was that we get people to do strike duty from all the locals in the joint council. Great idea, except for the fact that Billy Hogan, the head of the joint council at the time, had his people crossing our picket lines. Frank Wsol, head of Local 710, vice president of JC 25 and another Hoffa-backer, crossed all of our picket lines and refuses to go on strike at UPS. I don't think he has ever had a strike.

CD: What about the rerun election, where do you stand?

GZ: We've got to keep reform going. Look at the changes that have already been made in our union. We can't afford to go back to the bad old days when Hogan, Ligurotis and the rest were running roughshod over the members.

We've got a chance to do great things—and we can if we keep getting members involved and bring along a new generation of Teamster leaders, ones who are fighting 100 percent for the members.



James L. Harris
Local 705, Roadway Express steward

The last five years, with the new leadership, are the best I've ever seen in our local. Years ago the local's office was like a fortress, you couldn't get in. Their attitude was, "Be glad you've got a job." Grievances? Forget it, they were tossed aside. At one time their wasn't a single black steward.

Now we've restored the power. Nearly 500 members attend meetings, 200 of them stewards. The new guys listen to what you have to say. Zero's office is always open.

Best of all, members are participating more than ever. Guys used to lay back. Now they say, "This is our local." Our work and our union, this is our livelihood. We've got to make it work.

Michigan Conference of Teamsters Welfare Fund

How Would Hoffa Handle Our Benefits?

Teamster members in Michigan have won a victory against corruption that shows why all Teamsters should think twice about allowing Hoffa to gain control of our union.

We depend on our Teamster health benefits to make our families more secure.

But for years, some 17,000 Teamster members, retirees, and their families in Michigan couldn't count on benefits provided by the Michigan Conference of Teamsters Welfare Fund.

Teamster families were getting their health claims denied. Payments to doctors, hospitals, and labs were delayed for months or even years. Patients were told they would be reimbursed for only a fraction of the cost of necessary medical procedures.

Instead of providing good health care for members, Trustees of the Michigan Fund were using its assets as their own personal piggy bank.

Now, four Teamster members who filed a class action lawsuit to put an end to the corruption have won a settlement that requires:

- A court appointed "Independent Fiduciary" to overhaul and oversee the fund's operation.
- A full-scale review of all fund operations by a national accounting firm, and automatic adoption of recommended reforms.
- Two professional trustees will be added to the board, to teach Hoffa's friends how to run a health and welfare fund.
- A new "Participants/Beneficiaries Committee" with authority to attend meetings and monitor the fund's operations.
- Anti-corruption safeguards to prevent the rampant abuses of the past.

To Hoffa, Michigan Fund Was a 'Family Affair'

While Teamster families struggled to get their medical bills paid, Junior Hoffa and his cronies didn't have any trouble getting jobs for themselves, their families, and their friends.

- Hoffa's Teamster sponsor, Larry Brennan, controls the fund and was sued by members who won major reforms.
- Hoffa was the fund's lawyer.
- Hoffa got his two sons jobs at the fund.
- Hoffa's strategist, George Geller, was on the fund's payroll.
- A key Hoffa supporter, Bill Bernard, was a trustee of the fund.
- Bernard got his son a job at the fund.

Members' Money Was Wasted

In 1995, A Department of Labor investigation revealed that trustees and staff for the Michigan Conference of Teamsters Welfare Fund spent hundreds of thousands of dollars of members' money on things like:

- "Adult entertainment" featuring nude dancers.
- Golf outings, bowling, and other entertainment.
- Luncheons and dinners for staff at local restaurants.
- Liquor for parties and receptions.
- Transportation and lodging at resorts.
- Automobiles that were used by staff, then sold for below market value to staff or officials overseeing the fund.

In 1996, fund trustees agreed to repay almost $725,000 to the fund to settle a lawsuit brought by the federal government.

But that amount is only a fraction of the $5 million that corruption has cost the fund over the last 15 to 20 years.

Two former executive directors went to jail for racketeering, kickbacks, and other crimes.

Hoffa and His Cronies Looked the Other Way

During three years when corruption at the fund was at its peak, Junior Hoffa served as the fund's attorney.

But after the wrongdoing at the fund was exposed, Hoffa told CNN, "It wasn't my problem."

Hoffa's sponsor, Larry Brennan, head of Teamsters Local 337 and Joint Council 43, appoints trustees to the fund – including the five who were named in the members' lawsuit.

Instead of encouraging reforms in the fund after corruption at the fund was made public, Brennan took steps to tighten his control over the fund.

Brennan appointed his buddy Bill Bernard (another key Hoffa ally in Michigan) as chairman of the fund's board of trustees – even though Bernard had been cited in the Labor Department's investigation for putting his son on the fund's payroll.

To try to block changes at the fund, Brennan appointed two of his old guard allies as trustees and established an "Audit Committee" comprised entirely of his cronies.

Brennan was also cited in the Labor Department's investigation for purchasing a pickup truck from the fund for almost $10,000 below market value.

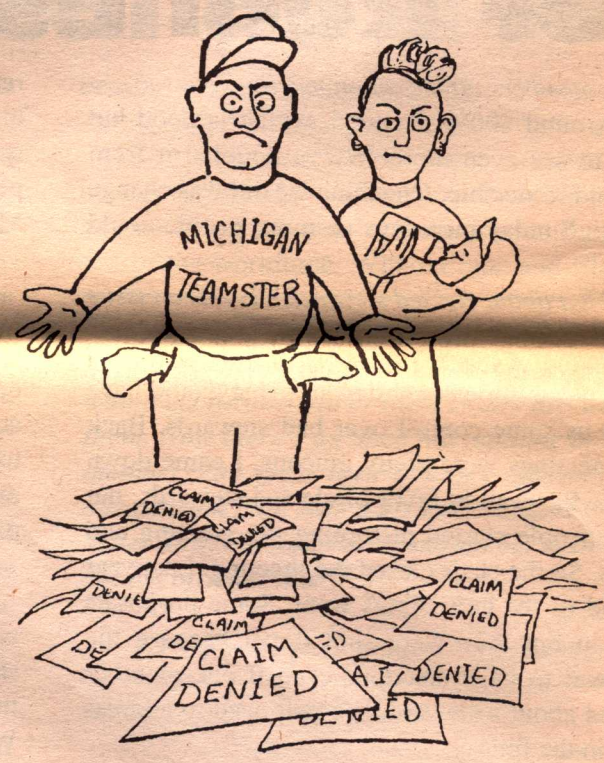
Rank-And-File Members Fought For Change

Teamster members realized that they'd have to fight for real reform of the fund.

With legal support from the International union, four TDU members, Local 337 members Robert Jordan and David Iho, Local 164 member Bill Sercombe, and Local 7 member Patrick Reardon filed a class action lawsuit against the fund and the organizations and people responsible for appointing its trustees, including Joint Council 43 and Larry Brennan.

The settlement means that members and their families will be able to get the benefits they deserve from the fund.

Michigan members' struggle for justice shows why members can't trust our benefits or our union to Junior Hoffa and his cronies.



'We Had to Do Without Medical Care'

Is the care of a good pediatrician important to your family? Do you think your health plan should provide you or your spouse with access to a gynecologist?

"Since our children were born, we have looked for a pediatrician who will be covered under our health plan, but the clinic doesn't have one," said Jenifer Akins, whose husband Sean is a member of Local 7 who works for Alvan Motor Freight in Kalamazoo.

"I went in for my annual exam, and the clinic wouldn't or couldn't refer me to a gynecological provider in our area," she said. "We've had to do without care because we can't afford to pay out of our own pocket."

Many Teamster families in Michigan haven't gotten the kind of care they needed from the Michigan Conference of Teamsters Welfare Fund.

That's because Junior Hoffa and his cronies who control the fund allowed hundreds of thousands of dollars that should have been used to improve members' benefits to be spent on luxury cars, golf trips, expensive restaurants and topless bars.

Hoffa and his pals are hoping to get their hands on even more of our dues and benefit money if he's elected.

Members in Michigan had to take the fund to court to stop the corruption and force changes that will lead to better benefits.

Teamster members across the country have to work to defeat Hoffa and his pals and make sure they don't get a chance to ruin our benefits, too.

Teamsters Strike Honeywell

Rank and File Organize to Win

Gillian Furst
Local 1145, Honeywell
Minneapolis

For two weeks in February, the Honeywell Corp. was paralyzed by a rank and file rebellion that had all the earmarks of last summer's UPS strike.

Some 2,500 Teamsters struck the multi-national corporation which sought to implement a regressive two-tier, union-busting benefits package for new hires. Strikers picketed and rallied, winning widespread public support as they took their case to the community through the media.

Members mobilized, holding two large rallies that drew in other unions and prominent public officials; a barbecue was held on the picket line; a daily strike bulletin was published that lashed out at Honeywell and kept members informed; and a strike hotline was installed with daily updates. It was totally a rank-and-file effort.

What was missing was top Local 1145 officials who appeared to be as shocked by the strike as Honeywell itself. Rather than lead the walkout, they stood on the sidelines.

The walkout ended almost as suddenly as it had begun. Two weeks into the strike, Honeywell capitulated on one of the rank and file's four main demands, and Local 1145 officials put the proposal to a vote. It passed on Feb. 15 by eight votes, 1,024 to 1,016.

A huge protest ensued by rank and filers who felt the voting procedures were haphazard and highly irregular, a critical factor when the vote was so close. Because there was no sign-in system at the meeting, there was no way to ensure that only members in good standing could vote, or to prevent people from voting more than once.

VP Tom Gilmartin wrote Local 1145 President Jim Holte, recommending that the contract not be executed until the complaints about the balloting could be investigated. The IBT is sending in a representative to investigate.

Members Say No to Two Tier

Headquartered in Minneapolis, Honeywell is one of the biggest local companies. It is the nation's largest manufacturer of control devices. Twin Cities factories that make home heating and aeronautical controls were shut down by the walkout.

In the weeks before the walkout, members distributed leaflets in a rank and file contract campaign that got members excited about the issues. Some of the leaflets pointed out that Honeywell had a record $8 billion in sales last year. So, when members arrived at the contract meeting on Feb. 1 expecting to make major gains, they were appalled to learn that the Local 1145 leadership and most of the negotiating committee were recommending a concession-laden contract that included a proposal for a two-tier medical package and a two-tier pension. Members blasted the offer and voted down the proposal 1138 to 825, putting the union on strike.

Honeywell has long been a company where generations of members have worked. The thought that our own children would work on a lower scale than us riled the members, who told reporters: "This is a strike for our children and grandchildren who are yet to be hired here," and "Two-tier benefits will pit member against member and wreck our union." The idea that strikers were fighting for future generations got wide public support.

Rank and File Organize to Win

A group of long-time activtists in the local who had worked to fuel the contract campaign swung into action, printing 150 "No Two Tier" picket signs, plus another 100 picket signs that spelled out members' need for higher pensions and a better wage offer. By week's end, we called a formal meeting of the key activists to create a Strike Solidarity Committee.

Two support rallies, drawing 300 and 400 people, were held at Honeywell's largest plants in Golden Valley and Minneapolis. Speakers included Billie Davenport, a Northwest flight attendant and newly elected president of Teamsters Local 2000, the presidents of the local bus drivers union, airport machinists, the Minneapolis police federation, and two of the most prominent candidates for governor this year. Collections raised hundreds of dollars to help cover expenses.

The committee published 10 issues of a daily newsletter, the *Rank and File Strike Bulletin*. They contained articles promoting rallies, strike activities and union meetings, and helped to keep morale high. Articles included a story about the $3.7 million the CEO made in 1996, a story quoting members about the down sides of two-tier benefits, articles on bargaining sessions, a picket line cookout, and pictures of strikers.

Hundreds of each issue were printed and strikers organized to hand them out on each four-hour shift at the gates as well as at rallies and union meetings.

Each bulletin had a main message for that day, like an upcoming event. The bulletin was aimed toward building support for the strike. It did not criticize the leadership, but reported on suggestions to broaden the fight. It became the voice of the strike.

In addition to the bulletin, the committee started up a strike hotline. We installed an extra home phone line with an answering machine that provided taped daily updates on the strike. Also, members of the Minnesota chapter of TDU pitched in to help the strikers in many ways, from joining the picket lines and rallies to helping distribute the strike bulletin.

None of our organizing efforts happened overnight. We were able to build strike support because we built a campaign for reform that began in Local 1145 many years ago, pressing for issues of reform and solidarity. It began to take shape during the campaign for Ron Carey in 1991. But during the walkout we underscored the importance of unity, setting aside our differences and working together to win.

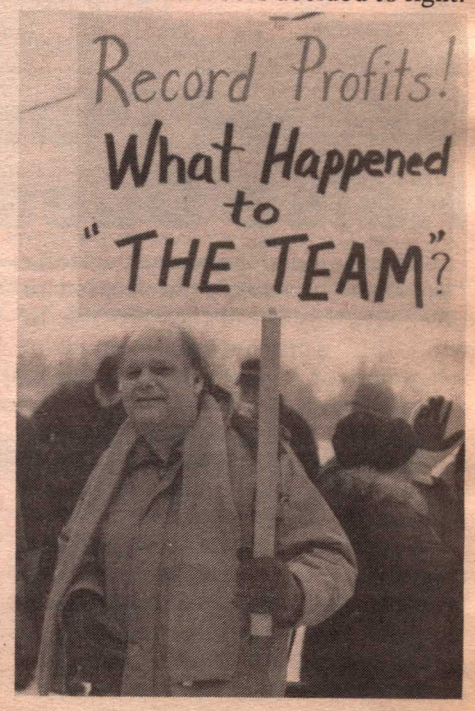
We Could Have Won More

Feeling the squeeze, the company came out with a second proposal that dropped the two-tier medical package, but retained the two-tier pension with no improvements in wages or the standard pension. Our officials recommended acceptance, although, again, a minority of the bargaining committee voted no. The eight-vote margin that passed the proposal is now under protest. Many members continue to feel they could have won more.

In a post-strike interview in the local paper, Honeywell CEO Michael Bonsignore acknowledged that the company was surprised by the walkout. He added, "It never entered my mind it [Honeywell's proposals] would serve as a wedge to divide the union. Why should I want to? We've been working well with them for many years."

As a local columnist observed, Bonsignore's comments "only verifies what many Honeywell Teamsters already believe; their leadership has not been reflecting worker values at the bargaining table." Nominations for office are about to be held in Local 1145. It promises to be a spirited election.

What we did didn't come easy, and there's no magic formula. The rank and file helped to show what was possible, and what leadership can do to affect a battle. We could have won more, but our single achievement – knocking out two-tier medical benefits – was won because the members decided to fight.



Getting Prepared for a Strike

(so hopefully you won't need one)

An often overlooked part of contract campaigns is strike preparation. As we see from the example at Honeywell, lack of preparation is not insurmountable, but not desirable. The key is to tap into the power of the rank and file.

Of course, everyone hopes to avoid a strike. By using member-to-member organizing, corporate campaigns and other smart strategies it's often possible to win without a strike. Still, being prepared is critical – in order to be ready to go in case a strike occurs, to let the company know you're serious.

The following are some tips to help in advance preparation. We invite local officers and rank and file leaders to give us examples of what's worked in your area and we'll print them in a future issue of *Convoy Dispatch*:

- **Develop an up-to-date membership phone list and phone tree.** This is indispensable when you are on strike and can't reach anyone because they are not at the workplace anymore.
- **Explore the idea of putting out a rank and file strike bulletin.**
- **Research your employer's clients.** Develop a listing, using shipping records or whatever documentation you can find. You may want to visit these clients during a strike, or send them a letter, to keep them informed of your employers bad faith bargaining. Get fax numbers, too.
- **Make a master list of all delivery companies that service your employer.** Try to get their addresses. Determine which ones are union – and what locals they are from. Get the local's phone number, address, the name of the principal officer and, if possible, the steward for the company. Be prepared to call them if their members cross your picket line.
- **Put together a media hit list.** Include talk radio programs and local TV stations as well as reporters for local papers. Get fax numbers, phone numbers and addresses.
- **Contact and get involved in local solidarity groups like Jobs with Justice and labor/religious coalitions.** Find out if there are any pro-labor politicians in your area. Be ready to reach out to these groups if a strike happens.
- **Dues payments and strike benefits.** In order to be eligible for strike benefits your dues must be up-to-date. Inform members of this ahead of time.
- **Cover your bases on medical benefits.** If your benefits are provided by a union fund, have the union trustees commit to continue coverage during the strike. Otherwise, members will be extremely anxious about their benefits coverage. Likewise, try to begin your strike early in the month (but after at least one day has been worked in the month) so members will have coverage at least for that month. Finally, get the facts on COBRA, a federal law that allows employees to make self payments on insurance premiums up to 60 days after you go on strike.
- **Assign picket captains and set up shifts for members.**
- **Be prepared to start an emergency strike fund and a food drive.** A call should be sent out to Teamster locals, other unions and solidarity groups.

Hoffa and Hoekstra: Tag Team for Anti-Union Attack

James Hoffa has a staunch campaign ally in Congressman Peter Hoekstra (R-Mich.). Recently the Hoffa-Hoekstra team has been beating the drum that the Teamsters union is about to go bankrupt.

Let's look at the facts about our union's finances:

- There have been big reforms in Teamster finances since 1992. Accruals to the officials-only Affiliates Pension Plan have been frozen (saving $12 million a year). The Area Conferences, with 62 multiple salaries, were abolished (saving local unions $11 million a year). Fat and multiple salaries have been cut, per diems for staff cut, jet planes sold, a special pension for International officers ended, and more (saving some $5 million per year).
- Those savings allowed the International to establish a real Organizing Department and end the downward membership slide; to establish a Strategic Campaigns Department to take on corporate union busters; to lead contract campaigns at major employers, and more.
- The International takes in some $7 million per month ($4.90 per member, a small fraction of your dues) and spends about the same amount. The International has some long-term liabilities that show up on the balance sheet as debts, such as obligations to the officials-only pension plan. This is similar to your owing money on a mortgage or for your kids' college. That would not mean you were about to go bankrupt.
- The International has lost $153 million since 1992. $123 million went directly into members' pockets in the form of strike benefits. More went to the cost of the government intervention that the old guard brought on. The rest went into union programs.
- The International union is underfunded. It's income has not risen since 1983, so adjusted for inflation it is half what it was then. In an era of globalization and multinational corporations, we need a stronger International, not isolated locals that cannot have the clout we need.
- In 1997 the International "lost" $12 million on the UPS contract victory and strike. More was "lost" on the Teamster campaign to beat NAFTA fast-track. These were good investments in our union's future.

It's time for Teamster members to tell Hoekstra that we know his anti-union agenda, and we know why he—along with UPS and the Wall Street Journal—is backing Junior Hoffa. He wants the Teamsters to go backward to weakness, not forward to strength.

Congressman Hoekstra – Hoffa's pal – wants to investigate these union campaigns and our union priorities.

- Is Hoekstra investigating UPS? They caused the strike and lost $700 million in it! Did Hoekstra investigate in 1991 when the International union lost $39 million under the old guard?
- Hoekstra has an anti-Teamster and anti-worker agenda. He opposed raising the minimum wage above $4.25. He worked with the American Trucking Associations to try to outlaw union "corporate campaigns" to expose wrong doing. He worked with Overnite to kill NLRB decisions against that union-buster. He wants to repeal the law requiring overtime pay for overtime work. ***Is this anti-labor congressman really concerned about our union, or about busting our union?***

It's time for Teamster members to tell Hoekstra that we know his anti-union agenda, and we know why he – along with UPS and the Wall Street Journal – is backing Junior Hoffa. He wants the Teamsters to go backward to weakness, not forward to strength.

Hoffa's 'No Dues Increase' Slate

Secret Plan to Raise Dues Exposed

The cat is out of the bag on the Hoffa "No Dues Increase" slate's plan to raise dues this fall, if they are able to win the International election scheduled for August. And they plan to do it without a membership vote.

The point is not whether a dues increase is a good or bad idea. The point is that Hoffa's slate is deliberately lying to Teamster members.

On Feb. 14 the Hoffa Campaign Coordinator for the Northwest, Jerry Halberg, wrote that dues should go to "two and a half times the hourly wage, added on to the per capita tax that goes to the International ... the International would then receive $13.90" per member per month. This would constitute a $9 dues hike. Halberg and other Hoffa campaign operatives have issued several other statements to the same effect, that an immediate dues increase should be imposed after the election.

At the January IBT General Executive Board meeting, International Vice President Pat Flynn ($175,427 in salaries and on the Hoffa Slate) stated that dues must be increased to maintain strike benefits. Other Hoffa Slate vice presidents from the Central Region agreed. These fat cats were elected to office on the "No Dues Increase" slate.

While running as the "No Dues Increase Slate" they have a secret plan to immediately raise members' dues, without a vote.

They plan to impose this dues hike by calling a special convention, thus avoiding any vote by rank and file Teamsters.

Hoffa and his friends raised dues in Ohio and Michigan locals for their own strike fund, which promptly went broke and abandoned the newspaper strikers. So lying about dues hikes is nothing new for Junior.

While running as the "No Dues Increase Slate" they have a secret plan to immediately raise members' dues, without a vote. They've promised dozens of officials who lost their multiple salaries that they'll get them back, and they need your money to do it.

If they are lying to you about dues, what else are they lying about?

Hoffa-ites Claim IBT Not Broke, But Rich!

Hoffa's key backers in New York JC 16 are circulating charges they want to file against the International, claiming that the International is not short on assets, but actually is rich!

Anthony Rumore, president of Local 812 and of Joint Council 16, and Joel LeFevre, secretary-treasurer of Local 840, are rallying old guard support for their claim that the International union has some $50 million in assets more than it admits.

These old guard leaders charge that "the IBT would have the world believe that it has only $700,000 in net assets ... but it is obvious that the IBT's real net worth is closer to $50 million." (Draft charges, dated Feb. 5, 1998.)

At issue is an officials-only pension plan which the elected General Executive Board froze in 1994. The Teamster Affiliates Pension Plan (TAPP) was set up decades ago by the old guard to provide multiple pensions to all business agents and full-time officials in the union.

In a move to shift members' dues money from officers' perks to membership needs, the TAPP was frozen in 1994, saving $12 million a year to be used for membership programs.

But the International still carries obligations on its books to the TAPP for benefits already accrued. This obligation to TAPP means the net assets of our International union are very low. The TAPP itself presently has assets of about $583 million.

This is what angers Anthony Rumore, who moved up the ladder when his father was ousted from the Teamsters for being a made member of the Mafia. Rumore is hopping mad that officials are not accruing TAPP perks anymore. And Rumore wants the International to state that it has more than $25 million in assets, so that the $1 per capita assessment that the International gets from the locals will be cancelled.

Hoffa says the IBT is broke. But when it comes to their own perks, his key backers want the International to pay up.

Salary Grab in Cleveland Local 407

Members to Vote on Officers' Salaries

The Ethical Practices Committee has ordered Cleveland Local 407 to conduct a vote over its officers' recent salary grab. The local officers are intent on raising the pay of it's eight full-time officers and business agents from $56,700 to $63,089 a year. They also want to raise part-time executive board members' salaries from $6,000 to $9,912. The local leadership has appealed the EPC ruling overturning the salary increase to Tom Sever.

The local hid the salary increase under the rubric of a motion to "approve the minutes as read" at the October union meeting. Some 400 members attended the meeting; most came specifically to turn down the salary grab. As they waited for their opportunity to vote, the minutes were read and unanimously approved.

As EPC Administrator Michael Lewis said in his ruling, "Since the minutes were read accurately, no members, including those opposed to the salary increase, had a reason to vote against such a motion."

The members were then told by President Joe Pierani that they had just approved the salary increase. As the meeting erupted in protest, all motions and objections having to do with the issue were ruled out of order.

EPC Administrator Lewis made clear that a salary increase must be approved by a separate, informed vote because the local's bylaws require member approval for salary increases. The ruling, if sustained, gives the members a right to vote on the increase.

There is an interesting sidelight to this case. When the local gave its tape of the meeting to the EPC there was a gap in the tape covering the crucial period when the minutes were read. However, the EPC was able to get a full accounting of the meeting because a member made his own tape of the meeting. The local's response? They packed a subsequent meeting and passed a motion forbidding members from taping meetings.

Ballot Count Ordered

Battle for Democracy Continues in Buffalo Local 449

In February the International union ordered Buffalo Local 449 to count ballots that could affect the outcome of an election run in 1996. The 17 ballots will likely place some reformers on the executive board, giving the fight for democracy in the local a small but much needed boost.

Fed up with poor representation and a lack of democracy, members formed the Putting the Members First slate in 1996. Despite a late start and numerous election irregularities, the slate came close to winning many of the executive board spots. Then the local refused to count a number of ballots from UPS members, claiming they were inelegible to vote.

CF Manager Running Amok

While the battle over the election reults continues, members have suffered new lows in representation. Members at CF were handed renegotiated work rules—and told they had no right to vote on the changes. The substandard work rules reinforce an atmosphere where manager John Sikora runs roughshod over seniority rights and contract protections, treating the barn like his own private boot camp and creating divisions and low morale unheard of even at CF. Sikora takes it as apersonal affront when grievances are filed, and retaliates against members who speak up. A lack of aggressive representation from the local only makes matters worse, leaving it up to members to fend for themselves. Grievances are thrown out without members being told their status, or they languish at the panels for months or longer.

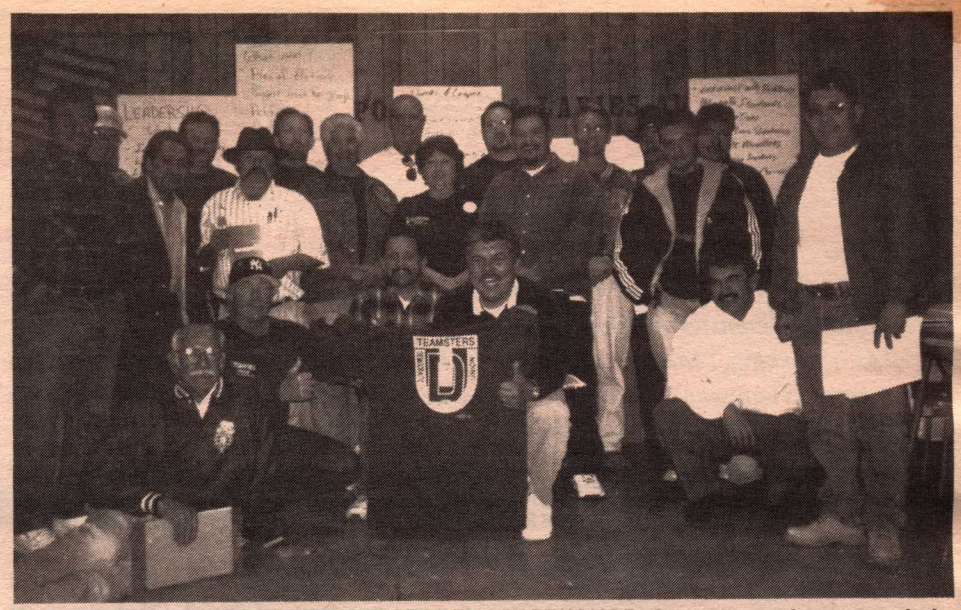
UPS on Rampage

UPS has also been on the rampage. In February they fired a part-timer who tripped over a belt and injured himself, then refused to honor the innocent until proven guilty clause. When steward Greg Harrigan tried to defend the member, UPS fired him as well, claiming he was "interfering with the operation of the company!"

But UPS won't be getting rid of Harrigan that easily. Once the disputed ballots are counted (now slated for March 3) he will likely be vice president of the local. Yellow Freight driver John Thom may also be put over the top for a trustee position.

TDU Chapter Growing

Over 30 Local 449 members attended a TDU meeting in December to discuss plans for restoring democracy to the local. "We've got to build a strong committee in this local that can fight for decent representation," one new TDU member said. "Companies like CF are getting their way because our local leadership won't stand up to them. Now we've got a chance to stand up and change our local."



LA CHAPTER HOLDS LEADERSHIP TRAINING WORKSHOP. Over 25 members attended a leadership training workshop on Feb. 1 sponsored by the Los Angeles TDU chapter. TDU steering committee member Joe Fahey planned and conducted the training. Many of our Los Angeles members are Spanish speaking and immediate translation was provided throughout the workshop.

N.Y./N.J. TDU Workshop Series

Education and Action

New York/New Jersey TDU has launched a three-part workshop series on "Building Teamster Power and Fighting for Reform."

"These workshops are about giving members the tools to build a stronger union by getting more members involved," said chapter chair Mike Ruscigno. "That's where our power as a union comes from—the members. When you talk about building Teamster power, you're talking about organizing member-to-member, building rank and file power. That's what Teamster reform is all about."

The workshop series includes:

- **Defending Your Rights on the Job.** An informed membership is the first step toward stopping management from violating our contract and our rights. Covers legal rights, what we can do and when we can do it.
- **Taking on Shop Floor Problems.** Winning grievances and stopping management attacks takes organization and power. This workshop uses an interactive video to explore creative tactics to get members involved and build power in the workplace.
- **Member-to-Member Organizing.** Whether your local leadership is leading the fight or dragging its heels, you can use member-to-member organizing techniques to win better contracts, improve working conditions, and organize for reform.

The workshops are held once a month on Sunday mornings as a joint project with the Teamster Rank and File Education and Legal Defense Foundation (TRF), the educational arm of TDU.

The workshop series is an example of TRF's Membership Participation and Democracy Project (MPDP) in action. For more information on the MPDP or on holding a workshop in your area, contact TDU.

¡Adelante! Moves Ahead

The second issue of *¡Adelante!*, TDU's Spanish/English newspaper, is hitting the presses.

This issue features articles on:

- Members' legal rights
- Member-to-member organizing in the grocery warehouse industry
- Sanitation workers' fight for a good contract in Los Angeles
- Rank and file organizing for respect on the job and in the union

Distributing *¡Adelante!* is a great way to reach out to Spanish-speaking Teamsters in your area, whether you speak Spanish yourself or not. And because it's bilingual, *¡Adelante!* works well in workplaces that have both English and Spanish speakers.

For more information on *¡Adelante!* or to order a bundle, call the East Coast TDU office at (718) 624-7746.

Stratford, Conn., Local 1150

Sikorsky Aircraft Workers Push for Democracy, Accountability

Gary Thibeault
Local 1150, Sikorsky Aircraft
Stratford, Conn.

Workers at Sikorsky Aircraft are organizing a caucus called Teamsters for a Better Union to organize for a more democratic Local 1150 that is accountable to the members.

We want to bring together all Local 1150 members, including those who can't attend the monthly meetings, who want better representation.

Our first project is a campaign to amend our local bylaws. Our proposed changes include:

- **Super seniority for elected stewards only.** The local leadership has created an army of appointed stewards who serve as political lieutenants for the executive board. Many of these appointees have just a few years of seniority. The system of super seniority for appointed stewards promotes cronyism and is unfair to senior employees when layoffs are threatened.
- **Simple majority to pass bylaws.** It now takes two-thirds to amend bylaws. Majority rule would make it easier to make the bylaws more democratic.
- **Secret ballot vote on bylaws changes.** Last year when members proposed elected stewards, the local leadership packed the meeting with stewards and then demanded that members vote by standing up. A secret ballot would end this intimidation tactic.
- **Membership approval of major union expenditures.** Just 114 members were present at a union meeting in January where the executive passed a motion to purchase a building for over $375,000. Teamsters for a Better Union wants all local expenditures over $25,000 to be approved by membership referendum.

The time has come for all members to stand up and be counted. These bylaws changes affect us all and their passage will bring greater democracy to our union and give more power to the members.

The proposed bylaws changes have been read at the January and February membership meetings and will be put to a vote at the March 18 meeting.

MOVING?

Be sure to notify TDU of any change of address. Contact the TDU office at P.O. Box 10128, Detroit, Mich. 48210, call us at (313) 842-2600, or fax to (313) 842-0227

June 12-14, Cleveland

Teamster Women's Conference

All Teamsters are invited to attend the Teamster Women's Conference, June 12-14 at the Sheraton City Centre in Cleveland. The conference will provide information on organizing, contract campaigns, building community support and tackling problems on the shop floor.

Registration of $125 covers materials and meals. (Lodging separate.) For more information, contact your local union, call the IBT Education Department at (202) 624-8117 or write to Women's Conference Information, IBT Education Department, 25 Louisiana Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20001

Teamster Women
Organizing for the Future

Get information on our union through the Teamster Women's Network. Sign up on the internet at the International union's website, http://www.teamster.org, Teamster Women Organizing for the Future.

The Race Is On

Proposed Dates for Rerun Election Call on Us to Get Going Today!

Working people across North America are watching. The rerun election for International Teamster officers is on.

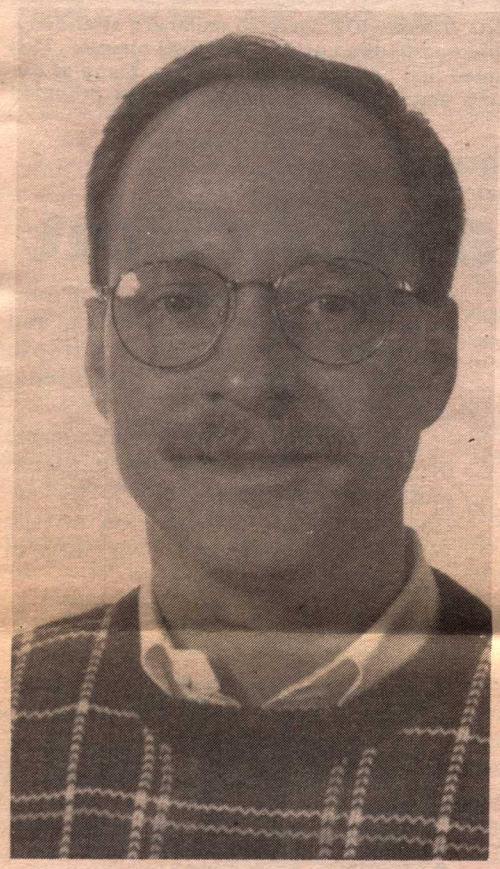
"As a working Teamster and activist, I know what our movement stands for and I know Teamster members want to keep building reform and Teamster strength," says TDU co-chair Michael Savwoir of Kansas City Local 41.

"Everything we've fought for since the mid-1970s, everything we've won is on the line. Members are eager to learn who their new reform leader will be so they can campaign their tails off and pull victory from the old guard's grasp."

The Election Officer has sent supplemental Election Rules and an election timetable to Judge David Edelstein for approval (see page 1). Under the proposed timetable, the elected delegates from the 1996 IBT Convention will be mailed ballots on May 1 to nominate candidates, including those running for General President. Election ballots will be mailed to all 1.4 million Teamsters on July 27—only five months from now—and the ballots will be counted just before Labor Day.

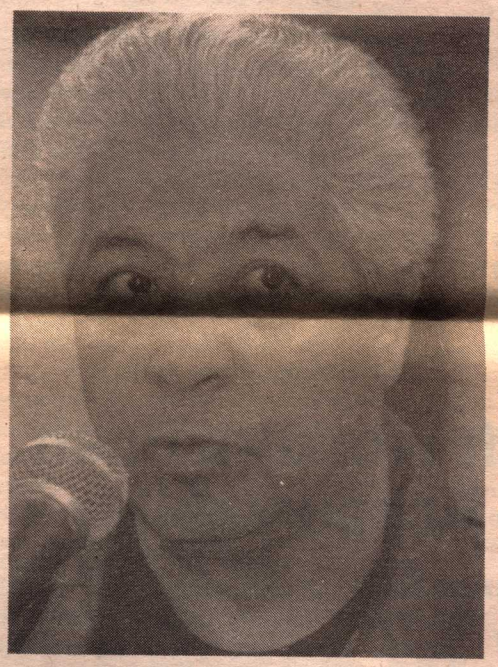
The reform coalition must name a General President candidate with a proven track record of fighting for reform and mobilizing members in contract and organizing campaigns. Ron Carey is continuing to fight the charges against him, as he must, but the election is fast approaching.

Election Officer Michael Cherkasky says he'll complete his investigation of Junior Hoffa by early April. But whether our old guard opponents are led by Hoffa or one of his cronies, we can't delay.



Teamster reform delivered power to the members to fight and win. Last summer's UPS strike showed what we can do. I will always remember Ron Carey for the reforms he introduced and his courageous leadership in the showdown for justice against Big Brown. But the strike wasn't about one man, and neither is this election. It is time for a true reform leader who knows how to mobilize the members to step forward and lead the charge to victory. We'll back that reform candidate with a strong grassroots campaign. And it's time for the reform coalition to back him as well—now! Membership power delivered victory at UPS. Membership power will deliver a victory for reform over Junior Hoffa and the old guard.

Butch Traylor
Local 728, UPS Package Car Driver,
Valdosta, Ga



The upcoming election for IBT officers is the most important choice that Teamster members will ever face. Either our union moves forward with reform or backward to the days of the old guard's dictatorship and corruption. The members control this election. Our campaign will give them a clear choice for continued reform and Teamster strength. The election will be over by Labor Day. Time is short, and Junior Hoffa has a head start. Let's get behind a candidate for General President *today* who is a fighter for working people and a true reformer who will lead the reform coalition to another stunning victory.

Raul Rodriguez
Local 630, Certified Grocers
Los Angeles

In 1996 a lot of the part-timers where I work didn't understand what the whole Hoffa vs. Carey thing was all about. We knew we needed change at UPS, but we needed to learn how to go about it. Last summer we learned how to fight and win. In this upcoming election, more part-timers than ever will vote—and they're looking to back a leader who will continue to mobilize members against corporate greed and for a better future.

Angela Schenburn
Local 243
UPS Preloader/Air Driver
Detroit

Look at the freight situation. Even Hoffa's own people—all his Central region VPs—are backing the proposed contract. Meanwhile, Hoffa sits back and says he could get a better deal. Members are smart enough not to buy this line. We remember when Hoffa's boys were in power and they rammed contracts down our throats with the old "two-thirds rule." We cannot build Teamster power in the freight industry with Hoffa. We need a new leader, a reformer, ready to build for the future. Last time Hoffa got half of the freight vote. But this time he'll be lucky to get a third.

Roy Luckett
Local 891, ABF Road Driver
Jackson, Miss.